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c/o ~~Carmel~~ The Little Company of Mary
Calvary Nursing Home
Sudbury Hill
Harrow-on-the-Hill
Monday August 29th 1971.

Dearest René

Forgive my failing to write for all this incredible time, ~~and~~ I was so pleased to get yr letter, – the earlier one saying that Barbara Moray* had called, & the one with a bit of yr own poiesis & your saying that if one has not kept open the lines of communication for some time it becomes impossible to speak of what's happened in the meantime — one can't go back to Genesis ~~[illegible]~~ or even Isaias but can start only with yesterday or today — that terribly true & actually prevents one from writing at all sometimes. Now I've received your second letter & – can't find it now, but only the first! I mislay absolutely everything – it's really alarming & causes no end of trouble – in fact I spend a good half of some days searching for lost correspondence.

Yes, Walter came – it was nice to see him again – he looked well I thought. & asked if I had heard from you lately.

Yes, a chap has written a book 'about' me. David Blamires a tutor of German at Manchester Univ. He wrote that piece called 'The Ordered World' in the Agenda special issue to mark [illegible] that would be in 1968-9. I thought ~~that~~ it awfully good it had a feeling ~~[illegible]~~ of something suddenly ~~[illegible]~~ & strongly perceived – or so I thought.

Well, he asked me if I would mind his writing a more or less biographical study & I said that was jolly nice of him but would anyone publish it after all his labours (knowing how chancy it is to get anything published now a days) Anyway he tried Fabers but they said they could not owing to expenses; he

*Haven't seen or heard from Barbara for ages.

N.B. In haste, none of this letter has been read through.

Not heard from or seen [illegible] Harman for ages. they are taking a house in East Anglia north of Colchester.

then tried the Manchester Univ. Press, but they turned it down ~~too~~ (this would be a couple ~~of~~ years back) ~~&~~ then, quite suddenly, about Xmas 1970 or Jan 1971 he received a letter from the Man. Univ. Press saying that if he added more about my visual works (water-colours etc) they would publish it. But of course, for him, that meant practically writing a new book in the sense of ~~making~~ a companion ~~or~~ showing the relationship of the water-colours, inscriptions, engravings etc to the written stuff. & it had to be done fairly promptly, to be out this July. Anyway, he did this. We agreed from the start ~~[illegible]~~ that it would best if he did not send me any of the MSS, as there would bound ~~to~~ to be suggestions of whether such & such could be put differently & that would only waste his time & mine. I had of course to supply him with such autobiographical details as date & place of birth, ~~[illegible]~~ Welsh ~~[illegible]~~ & English parentage, but no more. It had a good, balanced review in the T.L.S. (of July 28th) I can't imagine by what reviewer, rather an unusual review in that the chap was very impartial not effusive but saying that Dr Blamires had done a very good job of work and as this was the first study of the artist's work & ideas as a whole, it was very much to be recommended, was well ~~arranged~~ in a scholarly & ~~manner~~ careful manner, ~~He said for example that even as the poetry books of In Parenthesis [illegible] could never be a popular poet he [illegible] always have a fit [illegible] of readers and that Dr Blamires [illegible] helped to show the various other arts he had practiced. He [illegible] that~~

He, (the T.L.S. reviewer) "It is unlikely ~~that~~ David Jones can ever become a popular poet, even as the author of *In Parenthesis*. Where can he fit into, much less belong to, the contemporary "poetry scene"? No man was ever less trendy, less with it. It is of course, a triumph of imperceptiveness to consider him as not interested in to-days man and today's world because he assumes we have read the *Gododdin* and the *Song of Roland*, Geoffrey of Monmouth & the *Mabinogion* and (almost worse) the Authorised Version and the *Dies Irae*. His work insistently provokes questions: what are we? From ~~whence did we~~ what are we come? What shall become of us?" . . . .

Later he writes. He [Dr Blamires] is particularly good on *In Parenthesis* which, (to indicate the general problem) to a man of this reviewer's birth & upbringing is almost straightforward and on *The Anathemata* which to one of his [the reviewer's] upbringing & prejudices is troublingly not so. Dr Blamires's

There are just a few actual mistakes of fact but very few. I would have sent you a copy but have only one given me by David Blamires, none from the Man. Univ Press. & it's the astonishing price of £3.

X for about 200 pages. Unfortunately it's in a most dreary dust-jacket – which, ~~[illegible]~~ unless a person had a pretty big interest in D.J. Artist & Writer, one would not take a second look at. Dr Blamires had nothing to do with its production. I notice it is one of series published by the Manchester Univ Press with the aid of a Grant from the Ward Bequest – don't know what that is.

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exposition would be equally useful if things were the other way round" (End of quote)

Forgive the long quotation, but I felt it to be a good deal above the sort of stuff one is ~~accustomed~~ accustomed to in reviews. Not just the old stuff of either the 'fans' or the hostile chaps. Alas, this disgracefully delayed letter ~~will~~ can be only a note after all. I want someone to post it for me to-day if possible — to assure you that though I've not written I think of you every day — and often & often require your aid, as in the old days. I never ~~imagined I~~ imagined I should be still in a nursing home 18 months after that stroke & subsequent bone-smashing of a fall. And the curse is that all my stuff, books etc. are at Monksdene — I had to keep the place on there being no alternative — but I can't go into all that now. Couple of chaps from U.S. about to arrive to ask questions. They are nice, but it's exhausting. & in spite of all these repeated assertions of my ideas in Epoch & Artist & elsewhere not much seems to have really sunken in. (E. & A no longer available in Britain)

Yes, I can get on with a certain amount of writing, but without all my slowly gathered books & odd papers it's bloody difficult — was about four hours the ~~other~~ day finding out the way to spell or pronounce Sword Colum Cille, ?? — about 15 miles I think, north of (?) Baile Atha Cliath, (where Gruffydd ap Cynan was brought up by Irish-Norse foster parents — his father (Cynan) king of Gwynedd having fled to Ireland about 1050 & married a Norse-Irish. Irish-Norse princess called Pefrog)

Can't spell that either — or pronounce it.

Yes, I bet 'politics' are in a curious stir where you live. I never thought I should live to see all the old stuff turn on again from before & after War I. In the newspapers it's like hearing cracked recordings of the same stuff.

I recall standing outside Camberwell Art School with a student friend — I can see his face now — & he saying "See that placard by the shop where Solly buys his fags?" "No" what did it say?" "Will Ulster fight or is it a great

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~~I [illegible] [illegible] the rite to begin to [illegible]~~
~~the [illegible] [illegible] liturgy [illegible] [illegible] painful [illegible]~~

Game of bluff?!". Don't like the sound of it." poor chap, a few months later he'd joined 'Kitchener's First Hundred Thousand' & I heard no more of him. ~~as~~ whatever the 'Mutiny in the Curragh' may have been the West Front was certainly no game of bluff'.

I've just be tired by a nurse
My U.S. visitor has arrived so must stop.

Look after yourself René — I wish we were coming down that slope above Capel & you saying Duo homines per aquam nobis restituerunt rem. and telling of the adaptation by Vergil of Ennius — I owe a lot, a great lot, a very great lot to you, dear René, more than you can guess.

Have not read ~~Hans~~ Hans Küng book but loathe what either I heard him say in articles in Tablet. But it's useless to start on that stuff in the brief note. To me everything the clerics have imposed since the cutting away of the Last Gospel has been a gradual & bit by bit pointless cheapening of the Mysteries, & it's foolish, so it seems to me, to pretend that the Catholic mythus is other than a complex of mysteries of inexplicable splendour. that is consonant with man & his nature as a sign-making animal. The Roman Liturgy as it stood with the Chant was a stupendous art-work loaded with the sacral, apperceived not by the understanding of this or that particular word or words but by the whole of man's faculties — as inutile as Mary Magdalen's precious unguents poured out from the ~~[illegible]~~ fractured alabaster, an reprehensible act of the ~~[illegible]~~ most inutile sort — but the Cult-Hero gave a sharp response to those of that opinion, "Let her be. I tell you straight that wherever ~~[illegible]~~ in the whole world ~~[illegible]~~ is sung the chanson of my deeds & this shall be told for an anamnesis of her.

The story is the tabular of the extra-utile that covers all Ars. & all religio other than ~~[illegible]~~, what is sometimes ~~practical religion~~

called 'practical religion' 'humanitarianism' or 'doing good' etc. Of course that's all part of
the XTcan tradition too, but thinks all of the order of prudentia is does not & requires no 'rites' whatever
but then Xtian mythos then goes by the board — & priesthood of the Order of Melchisedech, than this no meaning — the most important figure in the O.T. as foreshadowing the actual Oblation of 2,000 years later at the Abendmahl. & sine ~~patre~~ patre sine matre, sine genealogia ... assimilatus autem Filio Dei
but neither have any of the arts of man — if the utile is all. In fact we're right back with
Dr Craig ~~of Balliol~~ Master of Balliol & his Hegelianism I quoted in E&A. — but you know all that
far better than I. Must shut up. I get terribly tired — will write properly later.
Very much love to Joan & thank her & Rosalind for the
messages. God keep you,
much love David.

Have not read any of the letter though
so God knows what rubbish it may contain &
mistakes of all sorts. Dai